



February 16, 2022

Dear RCS Families,

We are encouraged by reports indicating a decline in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations across the state. With an increase in vaccine, testing, and treatment access, we remain hopeful that progress will continue.

The following information reflects updated guidance and COVID-19 mitigation protocols from our local health experts.

Beginning on Monday, Feb. 28, 2022, masks will be optional in Oakland County schools and daycares. The [Oakland County Health Division](#) (OCHD) rescinded the [Emergency Order \(2021-01\) for Control of Pandemic](#), which obligated educational institutions to require students, teachers, and staff to wear a face covering to slow the transmission of COVID-19.

It's important to note that the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) **still requires masks on school bus transportation** at this time.

Earlier today, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) also updated its [mask guidance for public settings](#), to include schools. It is recommended that parents and caregivers assess risk factors within their own families when making personal choices about wearing a mask. The MDHHS states that those with chronic illnesses or who are immunocompromised could benefit from masking indoors.

We continue to reinforce that **at no time will students or staff be discriminated against for their vaccination or mask-wearing preferences**. RCS abides by a respect code that ensures all members of our community will be safe, valued, and respected.

The CDC, MDHHS, and the OCHD continue to support layered mitigation strategies to prevent the spread of illness, which can include masks, vaccinations, testing if exposed or symptomatic, frequent hand washing, and staying home when sick.

With the updated guidance, schools are not required to contact trace for COVID-19. For questions regarding the OCHD school quarantine and isolation guidance, families can contact the OCHD Nurse on Call at 800-848-5533.

Rochester Community Schools is participating in the MI Backpack Home Tests program, a voluntary at-home COVID-19 pilot testing program offered by MDHHS for K-12 settings.

Parents who opt into the program will receive one test "kit," which includes two at-home tests. MDHHS will provide the kits and educational materials, and schools will distribute the kits to students and staff who choose to enroll. There is no obligation to participate.

Parents and caregivers who wish to have their student participate in the MI Backpack Home Tests program must complete the [online form](#). Additional details will be provided as soon as the information becomes available.

The MDHHS does not recommend testing for those who have recovered from confirmed COVID-19 in the past three months and remain symptom-free. Any student or staff member who has symptoms of COVID-19 should still isolate at home.

Thank you for your continued support as we adjust to the updated COVID-19 guidance and protocols.

Sincerely,
Dr. Robert Shaner
Superintendent